

LEARNING SUPPORT GUIDE



Cookstown

Dungannon

Enniskillen

Omagh

LEARNING SUPPORT

The South West College is committed to providing a supportive and friendly learning environment for all students. Students who have learning support needs due to a learning difficulty and/or disability can contact the College's Learning Support Officer at the relevant Campus. The Learning Support Officer will endeavour to provide you with the facilities and extra support that you may require to be successful on your current course of study. Students will be treated on an individual basis and all information will be handled in a sensitive and confidential manner.

The College can offer a wide range of support depending on your assessed needs. This can include:

- In-class support, e.g. note takers, learning support worker, classroom assistant, interpreter
- One-to-one support outside of the classroom, e.g. help with assignments
- Specialist equipment, e.g. talking calculators, loop system
- Loaned equipment, e.g. laptop, dictaphone
- Specialist software, e.g. zoom text
- Course resources in alternative formats e.g. large print
- Special examination arrangements
- Dyslexia support

Student Learning & Support Officer Contact Details

If you have had a psychological assessment at your previous school please bring a copy of the psychologists report to the Student Learning & Support Officer at the campus where you are studying.

How to apply for help?

A student may be referred in person by themselves, by ticking the relevant box on the enrolment form, by their course tutor, by their previous school or by their parent/guardian.

A few examples of learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided in this Guide. However students should be aware that this is not an exhaustive list and support can be offered for a wide range of disabilities and/or learning support needs.

DYSLEXIA

The British Dyslexia Association has defined **dyslexia** as a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect the learning process in one or more of reading, spelling and writing. It is a persistent condition. Accompanying weaknesses may be identified in areas of speed of processing, shorter memory, organisation, sequencing, spoken language and motor skills. There may be difficulties with auditory and/or visual perception. It is particularly related to mastering and using written language, which may include alphabetic, numeric and musical notation.

Dyslexia can occur despite normal intellectual ability and teaching. **Dyslexia** is a life-long condition and although there is no cure the effects can be minimised through appropriate intervention, such as literacy support, technological support and adaptations to ways of learning and working.

Dyslexia Checklist:

- Are you bright in some ways with a 'block' in others?
- Is there anyone else in your family with **dyslexia** or similar difficulties?
- Do you have difficulty carrying out three instructions in sequence?
- Do you have particular difficulty with reading or spelling?
- Do you put figures or letters the wrong way, e.g. 15 for 51, b for d, was for saw?
- Do you read a word and fail to recognise it further down the page?
- Do you spell a word several different ways without recognising the correct version?
- Do you have a poor concentration span for reading and writing?
- Do you confuse left and right?
- Can you answer questions orally but have difficulty writing the answer?
- Do you have difficulty taking notes or copying?

This checklist is only a pointer; a full **dyslexia** assessment will determine if a person has **dyslexia**. If you believe that you could have **dyslexia** you can contact the Learning Support Officer at the relevant campus to discuss a possible assessment or your support needs.



If you feel you have any of these symptoms contact the Student Learning & Support Officer at your campus (see page 2) for further details on support available.

DYSPRAXIA

Dyspraxia is an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement that is often accompanied by problems with language, perception and thought. It is an immaturity in the way the brain processes information which results in messages not being properly or fully transmitted.

The pattern of difficulties in **dyspraxia** can vary widely from person to person, however a person with **dyspraxia** may have difficulties with:

- Planning their movements and being aware of the space around them. They frequently bump into and trip over things.
- Perception - they find it difficult to judge heights and distances.
- Coordinating different parts of the body - they may find it hard to catch, throw, balance as well as move the different parts of their body without looking.
- Laterality—it may be difficult to work out right and left without a reminder.
- Manual and practical work— it may be difficult to handle keyboards, tools and equipment safely and they can easily knock over and spill things.
- Handwriting—they tend to write laboriously slowly and/or untidy. Accurate copying can be difficult.
- Language— may find it difficult to pronounce some words and may stutter.
- Concentration— may take a long time to complete a task and can find it difficult to do more than one task at a time.
- Short-term memory and sequencing tasks— they may find it difficult to make sense of information when listening to or reading instructions, taking notes from books and lectures, and dealing with maps and charts. May also keep forgetting and losing things as well as finding it difficult to spell.
- Organisation and thought—may operate in a muddled way, having little sense of direction, time or weight. May constantly miss appointments and hand assignments in late because they find it difficult to organise themselves and their work.
- Response to external stimulation—may be over or under sensitive to noise, touch, light and taste.

If you feel you have any of these symptoms contact the Student Learning & Support Officer at your campus (see page 2) for further details on support available.

ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a condition that affects those parts of the brain which control attention, impulses and concentration. **ADHD** is usually identified in early childhood and can be difficult to diagnose. It was previously believed that children grew out of **ADHD** during adolescence however recent research suggests that children diagnosed with **ADHD** continue to experience symptoms during adolescence and into adulthood.

The symptoms of **ADHD** (impulsivity, hyperactivity and inattention) are not seen to the same extent in all people diagnosed with this condition. However, people with **ADHD** tend to display the following behaviours:

- Hyperactivity
- Impulsive behaviour
- Inattention
- Social clumsiness
- Poor co-ordination
- Disorganisation



If you feel you have any of these symptoms contact the Student Learning & Support Officer at your campus (see page 2) for further details on support available.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) /Aspergers Syndrome

Autistic Spectrum Disorder, or **Autism** as it is referred to, is a life long developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and relates to people around them. People with **autism** have difficulties with everyday social interaction. Their ability to develop friendships can be limited as is their capacity to understand other peoples emotional expression. They may have trouble learning, understanding and interpreting the unwritten rules of social interaction and relationships that most people without **Autistic Spectrum Disorder** take for granted. People with **autism** generally experience three main areas of difficulty:

1. **Social Interaction** - difficulty with social relationships. Can appear indifferent or aloof to other people.
2. **Social Communication** - difficulty with verbal and non-verbal communication, such as not fully understanding the meaning of common gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice.
3. **Social Imagination** - difficulty in the development of interpersonal play and imagination.

In addition repetitive behaviour patterns and resistance to change in routine are often associated characteristics. **Autism** is a spectrum disorder which means that individuals may present a wide range of difficulties from mild to acute. These difficulties can vary widely from one person to another. Approximately 70% of people with **autism** may also have accompanying learning difficulties.

Aspergers is a form of **autism** used to describe people who are usually at the higher functioning end of the autistic spectrum. A number of traits are common to **Aspergers Syndrome**, these include:

- Difficulty in communicating
- Difficulty in social relationships
- A lack of social imagination and creative play
- Finding change to routine upsetting

Although these are the main features of **Aspergers Syndrome**, it is important to remember that every person with **Aspergers Syndrome** is an individual. Therefore these characteristics will vary greatly and some may be more strongly demonstrated than others.

If you feel you have any of these symptoms contact the Student Learning & Support Officer at your campus (see page 2) for further details on support available.

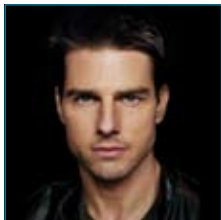
STUDENT ACTIVITY

Did You Know?

The following famous faces have or are believed to have conditions highlighted within this leaflet.

(Not all of these famous people have been officially diagnosed)

Can you guess what condition these famous faces have or are believed to have?



1. Tom Cruise



2. Kiera Knightley



3. Bill Gates



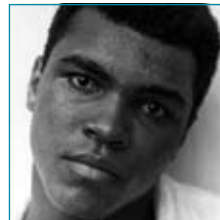
4. Whoopi Goldberg



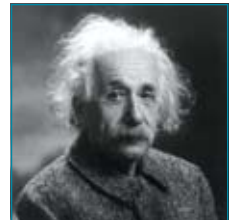
5. Richard Branson



6. Orlando Bloom



7. Muhammad Ali



8. Albert Einstein

Information sourced from:

- www.dyslexia.ie/famous.htm
- www.schwablearning.org
- www.muddlepuddle.co.uk/Misc/Aspergers.htm
- www.oneaddplace.com/famous.htm

ANSWERS
ADHD: (1) Tom Cruise, (4) Whoopi Goldberg, (8) Albert Einstein
Aspergers: (3) Bill Gates & (8) Albert Einstein
Dyslexia: (1) Tom Cruise, (2) Kiera Knightley, (5) Richard Branson, (6) Orlando Bloom, (7) Muhammad Ali & (8) Albert Einstein.

USEFUL LINKS

- Skill NI: www.skillni.org.uk
- Equality Commission: www.equalityni.org
- Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB): www.rnib.org.uk
- Blind Centre: www.bcni.co.uk
- Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID): www.rnid.org.uk
- Cedar Foundation: www.cedar-foundation.org
- Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health (NIAMH): www.niamh.co.uk
- Aware Defeat Depression: www.aware-ni.org
- ME Association: www.meassociation.org.uk
- Arthritis Care: www.arthritiscare.org.uk
- Multiple Sclerosis Society: www.mssociety.org.uk
- Spina Bifida Association: www.asbah.org
- MENCAP: www.mencap.org.uk
- SENSE: www.sense.org.uk
- Guide Dogs for the Blind: www.guidedogs.org.uk
- Brain Injury Headway: www.headway.org.uk
- Cerebral Palsy SCOPE: www.scope.org.uk
- The National Attention Deficit Disorder Information & Support Service:
www.addiss.co.uk
- The National Autistic Society: www.nas.org.uk
- The British Dyslexia Association: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk
- The Dyspraxia Foundation: www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

Cookstown Campus

Burn Road, Cookstown
Co. Tyrone BT80 8DN

T: 028 8676 2620

F: 028 8676 1818

Textphone: 028 8772 0625

Dungannon Campus

Circular Road, Dungannon
Co. Tyrone, BT71 6BQ

T: 028 8772 2323

F: 028 8775 2018

Textphone: 028 8772 0625

Eniskillen Campus

Fairview, 1 Dublin Road
Enniskillen

Co. Fermanagh BT74 6AE

T: 028 6632 2431

F: 028 6632 6357

Textphone: 028 6634 2225

Omagh Campus

2 Mountjoy Road, Omagh
Co. Tyrone BT79 7AH

T: 028 8224 5433

F: 028 8224 1440

Textphone: 028 8225 5237